

Appl. 10/601,828  
Reply to Office Action of December 14, 2004  
Amendment Dated June 14, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended) A die cutting apparatus, comprising:

at least one metal base portion in the form of a plate having a front surface, a back surface  
and perimeter sides defining at least one channel therein;

at least one blade ~~positioned within said at least one channel and~~ extending outwardly  
~~therefrom~~ from said front surface of said at least one metal base portion and exposing  
to expose at least one cutting edge along an edge of said at least one blade, ~~said at~~  
~~least one blade bonded to said at least one metal base portion;~~ and

a covering disposed at least partially over said back surface of said at least one metal base  
portion and at least partially covering said perimeter sides of said at least one metal  
base portion.

Claims 2-16 (canceled)

Claim 17 (currently amended) The die cutting apparatus of claim ~~16~~ 1, wherein said  
covering is comprised of plastic.

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Claim 18 (currently amended) The die cutting apparatus of claim ~~16~~ 1, wherein said covering ~~has a~~ increases the overall thickness of the die cutting apparatus for ~~allowing use of~~ adapting said at least one blade for use ~~die cutting apparatus~~ with an existing die cutting press.

Claim 19 (currently amended) The die cutting apparatus of claim ~~16~~ 1, wherein said covering extends substantially over said back surface of said at least one metal base portion and substantially along at least a portion of said perimeter sides ~~a side~~ of said at least one metal base portion.

Claims 20-31 (canceled)

Claim 32 (new) The die cutting apparatus of claim 1, wherein said covering is attached to said at least one metal base portion with an adhesive.

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Claim 33 (new) The die cutting apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a release pad attached to said top surface of the at least one metal base portion

Claim 34 (new) The die cutting apparatus of claim 33, wherein said release pad has a thickness approximately equal to a height of said at least one blade above the top surface of the at least one metal base portion.

Claim 35 (new) The die cutting apparatus of claim 33, wherein said release pad is comprised of at least one of neoprene or foam rubber that is compressible to expose the at least one cutting edge of said at least one blade when the release pad is pressed against a material to be cut.

Claim 36 (new) The die cutting apparatus of claim 1, wherein said at least one metal base portion and said at least one blade are separate components that are welded together to form a cutting die.

Claim 37 (new) The die cutting apparatus of claim 1, wherein said at least one metal base portion and said at least one blade are integrally formed to form a cutting die.

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Claim 38 (new) The die cutting apparatus of claim 37, wherein said cutting die is an etched die.

Claim 39 (new) The die cutting apparatus of claim 37, wherein said cutting die is a cast die.

Claim 40 (new) A die cutting apparatus, comprising:

a metal plate having a front surface, a back surface and perimeter sides;

at least one metal blade depending outwardly from said front surface of said at least one

metal base portion, said at least one metal blade having an exposed cutting edge for cutting into a medium in sheet form; and

a housing disposed over said back surface of said metal plate and at least partially covering said perimeter sides of said metal plate.

Claim 41 (new) The die cutting apparatus of claim 40, wherein said metal plate and at least one metal blade are integrally formed.

Claim 42 (new) The die cutting apparatus of claim 40, wherein said housing is comprised of a softer material than said metal plate to allow penetration of small protrusions in said back surface of said metal plate.

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Claim 43 (new) The die cutting apparatus of claim 40, wherein said housing is comprised of a softer material than said metal plate to substantially uniformly distribute a force being applied to said housing to said back surface of said metal plate.

Claim 44 (new) The die cutting apparatus of claim 43, wherein said housing is comprised of molded plastic and configured with a recess that substantially matches the perimeter sides of the metal plate.

Claim 45 (new) The die cutting apparatus of claim 40, wherein said housing increases the overall thickness of the die cutting apparatus to allow the metal plate and at least one metal blade to be used in an existing pressing device.

Claim 46 (new) The die cutting apparatus of claim 45, wherein said housing is an adapter having a predetermined thickness to adapt said metal plate for use with an existing pressing device.

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Claim 47 (new) A die cutting apparatus, comprising:

at least one metal base portion in the form of a plate having a front surface, a back surface  
and perimeter sides and defining at least one channel therein;

at least one blade positioned within said at least one channel and extending outwardly from  
said front surface of said at least one metal base portion and exposing at least one  
cutting edge along an edge of said at least one blade, said at least one blade bonded  
to said at least one metal base portion; and

a covering disposed over said back surface of said at least one metal base portion and  
substantially covering said perimeter sides of said at least one metal base portion.

Claim 48 (new) The die cutting apparatus of claim 47, wherein said covering is comprised of  
plastic.

Claim 49 (new) The die cutting apparatus of claim 47, wherein said covering increases the  
overall thickness of the die cutting apparatus has a thickness for adapting the at least one  
metal plate portion to be used with an existing die cutting press.

Claim 50 (new) The die cutting apparatus of claim 47, wherein said covering is attached to  
said at least one metal base portion with an adhesive.

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Claim 51 (new) The die cutting apparatus of claim 47, further comprising a release pad attached to said top surface of the at least one metal base portion

Claim 52 (new) The die cutting apparatus of claim 51, wherein said release pad has a thickness approximately equal to a height of said at least one blade above the top surface of the at least one metal base portion.

Claim 53 (new) The die cutting apparatus of claim 51, wherein said release pad is comprised of at least one of neoprene or foam rubber that is compressible to expose the at least one cutting edge of said at least one blade when the release pad is pressed against a material to be cut.